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LB 90

the wrong side of town or the defendant is from one of those two parts of town? When the judges say, as they have, well, yes, it's rape, but she provoked it...when the judge says, yes, there was an assault, but come on, he's gay. Those are the kinds of things we should attack. Those are the wrongs that we should be vigilant about and that's where we should work. We should see whether our prosecutors and judges use equivalent charges, they aggressively pursue cases, they don't plea bargain down whether the identity of the victim is an irrelevance or whether it's significant. And if it's relevant, that's where we should care because the identity of the victim should be an irrelevance. It is the crime itself. Years ago, Marge Higgins said we should have a special class of assault and that should be for people over 65. This year we had a bill in that said, look, if you're a teacher and you're assaulted, that's more heinous than other crimes. No. Assault is the heinous act and it does not matter what the motivation is. And the difficulty is if you start protecting classes and raising the penalties for certain motivations, it devalues everybody...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...who's not in those now protected classes. If the skinhead knocks Ernie Chambers on the head with a brick, that's a heinous act. If he avoids Senator Beutler because he's white, that's...and chooses Senator Chambers as his victim, that's a heinous act. But if Senator Beutler gets whacked over the head with a brick, it is the same heinous act and to protect Ernie more than Chris because of their racial identity is to say that we're going to give more deterrent power to one set of people than others. It is not the identity of the victim, it is the nature of the wrong itself and the act itself. We need to stop now this idea of holding up certain people to get more protection and more deterrence. We're already down that path. We're doing it on the death penalty bill. Okay. We did that. Kill a cop, it's worse than if you kill anybody else. Same thing...

SPEAKER WITHEM: Time, Senator.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...with that bill on the teachers. This is another variation of the same theme. Victims are irrelevant.